

WHEELCHAIR AUSSIE RULES RULES OF PLAY

INTRODUCTION

Wheelchair Aussie Rules (WCAR) has been developed to provide all Australian Football enthusiasts with a disability with a match play experience that has strong parallels with the traditional game. Importantly, WCAR is easy to play, not too physically demanding and provides an environment whereby participation, enjoyment and safety are a priority.

WCAR has many applications in the community, particularly in school and social environments. Fundamentally, WCAR enables people of all ages and disability levels to participate in male, female or mixed competitions that fit around their busy lives and provide a social and fitness outlet. WCAR is a totally inclusive sport.

The game is played between two teams of five (5) with interchange Players. The field is an indoor basketball or netball court (which can be modified depending on the age and ability level of participants) and is divided into three (3) zones, a centre zone and two scoring zones. Teams' score by hand balling (kick) or passing the football into their attacking scoring zone to the designated scorer who can score a goal or behind by hand balling the ball between the goal posts. A Mark is awarded when the ball has travelled three (3) metres.

Note: There is no kicking of the ball in WCAR. A hand ball is equivalent to a kick as per Australian Rules Football and a thrown ball equivalent to a pass. The ball may not be thrown over arm.



SPORTAUS

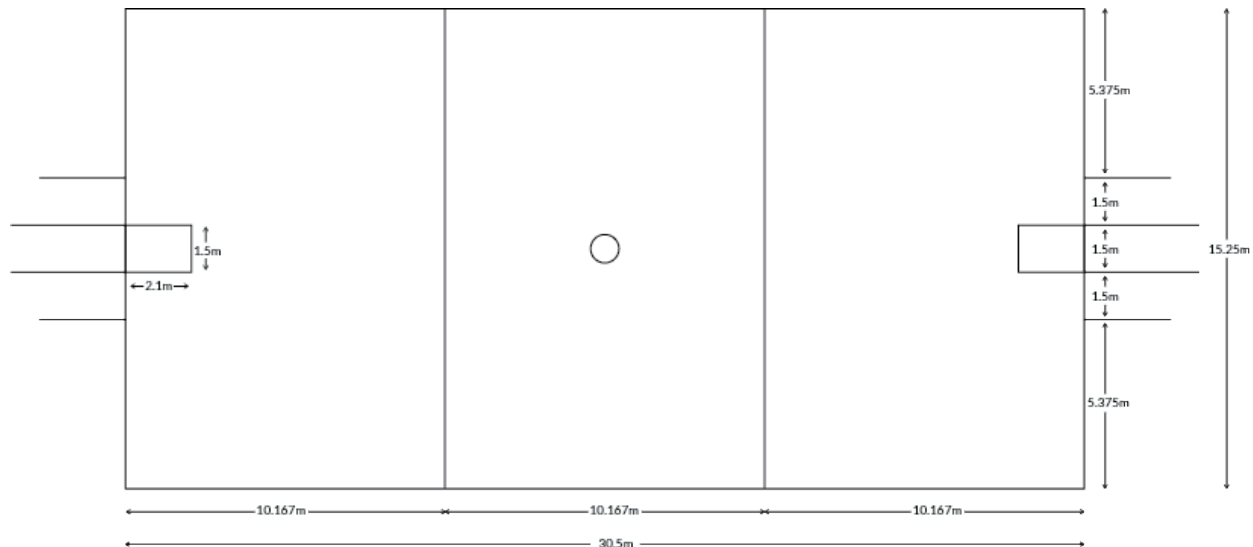
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1. THE PLAYING SURFACE

- 1.1. The size of the playing field should be similar to that of a netball court (30.5m [100ft] long and 15.25m [50ft] wide) and divided equally into thirds.



- 1.2. The playing field is marked with witches' hats, tape on the playing surface or similar markers on the boundary indicating where the change in zones occurs. The goal and point posts are to be placed as indicated in the diagram above. The heights of the point posts should be no less than 75cm with the height of the goal posts no less than 150cm.
- 1.3. A goal square should be taped on the court, so there is a designated area to dispose of the football after a point has been scored. The goal square should 2.1m long and 1.5m wide (as shown on the diagram above).

2. THE TEAM & ZONES

- 2.1. Five (5) Players to take the field at any one time with up to three (3) interchange Players.
- 2.2. Team consists of two backs, one centre and two forwards.
- 2.3. Players are restricted to which zone they can enter.
- 2.4. Forwards can only move in the Forward and Centre zones.
- 2.5. Backs can only move in the Centre and Back zones.
- 2.6. Centre can move in all zones.
- 2.7. Only the designated Forward can score.
- 2.8. The Players on the field are to wear a coloured sash, armband, or bib, to differentiate the forwards, centre and backs from each other.
- 2.8.1. Forwards are to wear a green sash, armband, or bib.
- 2.8.2. Centres are to wear a yellow sash, armband, or bib.
- 2.8.3. Backs are to wear a red sash, armband, or bib.
- 2.9. Players may change positions during interchange.
- 2.10. There must be a minimum of three Players with a disability on the ground at all times unless an alternative is agreed to by the captains before the start of play.

- 2.11. Prior to the start of play a Team Sheet, consisting of the Player's names and jumper number, is to be provided to the Umpire.

3. THE BALL

- 3.1. An AFL size 5 synthetic football is to be used for all games.

4. DURATION OF THE GAME

- 4.1. The game will consist of 4 x 10-minute quarters with no time on. The quarter time breaks will be of five (5) minutes duration and half-time interval will be ten (10) minutes in duration. The Competition Manager may vary the duration of the match and intervals as needed.
- 4.2. In the event that a Player has fallen out of their wheelchair and requires assistance to return to their wheelchair, the umpire will immediately suspend play if there is any chance of danger to the fallen Player. If not, the umpire will withhold their whistles until the particular play in progress has been completed.
- 4.2.1. The umpire is to call time off when a Player falls out of the chair and play has been stopped to allow the Player's to return to their chair.

5. MATCH OFFICIALS

- 5.1. It is recommended that each match has two (2) Umpires, two (2) goal Umpires and two (2) scorers/timekeepers. These match officials should be from opposing sides in order to ensure fairness during the match. The Umpires are the sole judge on the score to be awarded when goal Umpires are unavailable.

6. START OF PLAY

- 6.1. Prior to the start of play, the Umpire shall toss a coin with the 'Away' calling "the fall of the coin". The captain of the team who wins the toss shall choose the end to which their team kicks.
- 6.2. The game shall be started by a ball up between two centreline Players in the centre of the ground (centre circle if playing on a basketball court); Players must be parallel to each other in the ball up. Each team is permitted one additional Player in the centre zone for the ball up.
- 6.3. The two competing Players in the ball up cannot grab the ball or take possession of it until it has been touched by one of the centre Players not involved in the ball up or bounced on the playing surface.

7. GAINING POSSESSION OF THE BALL

- 7.1. Players may take possession of the ball, by picking it up from the ground or whilst it is travelling through the air. Players may attempt to intercept the ball in flight; however, they must not make contact with an opposing Player.

8. POSSESSION

- 8.1. A Player may stay in possession of the ball for a maximum distance involving three (3) pushes / change of direction of the wheelchair unless:

- 8.1.1. A tackle is made where the equivalent to a tackle is a one hand touch by an opposing Player.
- 8.2. The Umpire is to pay a Free Kick against should a Player not keep one bottom cheek in contact with the seat at all times and both feet on the footplate of the wheelchair.
- 8.3. If a Player falls out of their chair to gain possession of the ball or by falling keeps opponents from gaining possession of the ball, the ball is awarded to the opposing team.

9. BALL TRANSITION

- 9.1. The ball may not be kicked or passed from a kick in, after a behind is scored, or from a free kick resulting from the ball going out of bounds in the back zone, directly into the forward zone without touching a Player in the centre zone.
- 9.2. If this occurs, a Free Kick will be awarded to the opposing team at the point in which the ball entered the scoring zone.

10. DISPOSAL OF THE BALL

- 10.1. The ball must be disposed of by a kick or handball. A handball is equivalent to a kick in WCAR. An underarm pass is equivalent to a handpass using either one or two hands. The Player's arm(s) throwing the ball must remain under shoulder height in order for the pass to be legal. A Player may not throw the ball via an over arm action.
- 10.2. A double handed chest pass is classed as an illegal disposal, however a two handed underarm throw, similar to a rugby pass, is allowed.
- 10.3. If a deliberate attempt to kick or pass the ball into an opposing Player occurs to retain possession of the ball, a Free Kick will be awarded to the opposing team. Where the Umpires are unsure if this has occurred deliberately, a ball up will ensue.
- 10.4. A Player while disposing of the ball must keep one bottom cheek in contact with the seat at all times and both feet on the footplate of the wheelchair.

11. BOUNCING THE BALL

- 11.1. A Player in possession of the ball must "bounce the ball" (defined as touching the ball on the ground or the side of the wheelchair), after three (3) pushes of the wheelchair.
- 11.1.1. Where a Player uses their hands to change direction of the wheelchair, this is considered a push of the wheelchair.
- 11.2. A Player in possession can only "bounce the ball" once. The Player must then dispose of the ball by kick or hand pass and may not touch it again until another Player has touched it.
- 11.3. If a Player fails to "bounce the ball", the Umpire will award a Free Kick to the opposing team.

12. DISPOSSESSING THE PLAYER IN POSSESSION

- 12.1. When a Player in possession of the ball is touched by an opponent the opponent calls 'TOUCH' but is deemed to have had 'no prior opportunity' to dispose of the ball, the Player must dispose of the ball within three (3) seconds. Failure to do so will result in a Free Kick being awarded to the opposing team. The Umpire will count out aloud so that the Player in possession is aware of the time allocated to dispose of the ball.

- 12.2. When a Player in possession of the ball is deemed to have had 'prior opportunity' to dispose of it when touched by an opposing Player (either one- or two handed), the Umpire will award a Free Kick to the opposing team.
- 12.3. An opponent may knock the ball out of the hands of the Player with the ball, provided they only touch the ball.

13. SHEPHERD A PLAYER

- 13.1. Player may shepherd / defend an opposition Player:
 - 13.1.1. As long as the defensive player has wheelchair position, e.g. the rear axle is in front of the opposition Players footplate.
 - 13.1.2. The defensive Player must give the opposition player space to stop.
 - 13.1.3. The shepherd / defend is no further than 3 metres away from the football.
- 13.2. If the Player does not have position and makes contact with an opposition Player's wheelchair or if the shepherd / defend is further than 3 metres away from the football, a Free Kick will be awarded.

14. MARK

- 14.1. The ball must travel at least three (3) metres after a ball is kicked by another Player for a 'Mark' to be awarded.
- 14.2. Both feet need to be placed on the footplate, whilst taking a 'Mark', for a 'Mark' to be awarded.
- 14.3. When a Player is awarded a 'Mark' an opposing Player may stand at the position on the playing surface where the Mark was awarded, known as 'the Mark'. No Player (except for the Player on the Mark) may be closer than 2 metres away in any direction.
- 14.4. There is no body contact in a Marking contest. A Free Kick will be awarded against any Player initiating contact.
- 14.5. There may be accidental wheelchair contact.
- 14.6. The Player taking the Mark will have a reasonable opportunity to dispose of the ball or play on. If he/she delays, the Umpire will place a three (3) second count for play to resume.
- 14.7. It is not a Mark if the ball touches the ground or has been touched by another Player during the period when the ball was kicked until it was caught or controlled by the Player.

15. PLAYING ON

- 15.1. The Umpire shall call "play on" in the following:
 - 15.1.1. When a Player, after taking a Mark, wheels more than one (1) metre over or around the sport of "the Mark" where he/she caught the ball.
 - 15.1.2. The ball, after being kicked, has been touched in transit.
 - 15.1.3. The Player is able to keep the ball in the field of play even though their wheelchair is out of bounds.

16. SCORING

- 16.1. Either forward can kick for goal from within their forward zone or the centre zone. If a Mark or a Free Kick is awarded, the forward may roll away from the Player on the Mark in order to take their kick. This includes rolling outside of the centre zone.
- 16.2. The field / goal Umpire will be the judge of whether the kick for goal was successful.
- 16.3. A Player may kick for goal from a Free Kick (initiating contact, 'holding-the-ball', etc.), but not from a Turnover (going out-of-bounds).
- 16.4. A goal or behind is scored if the ball touches the ground and bounces through, provided that it is kicked by a Player and has not been touched between making contact with the ground and passing through the goals.
- 16.5. A point is scored if:
 - 16.5.1. The ball hits the goal post.
 - 16.5.2. The ball is touched in flight by any Player prior to going through the goal posts.
 - 16.5.3. The ball goes between the goal and point posts.
- 16.6. Scoring is as per the Laws of Australian Football.

17. **RESTART OF PLAY**

- 17.1. After a goal, play is restarted in the centre of the field via a ball up.
- 17.2. If a behind (1 point) is scored the ball is required to be kicked back into play between the goals by a defender. The defender will be able to utilise the goal square to dispose of the ball also should they wish to do so. The Player pm the Mark needs to be one (1) metre away from the end of the goal square.
- 17.3. **"Playing on from a behind"**. Should a Player wish to play on from a behind they must do so from coming out between the goal posts. A Player can push straight out to 'play on' without touching the ball on their wheelchair.

18. **OUT OF BOUNDS**

- 18.1. For the ball to be deemed out of bounds, the ball must completely cross the line. A Player's wheelchair being out of bounds will not characterise the ball being out of bounds/ Should the Player manage to keep the ball in the field of play, even though their wheelchair is out of bounds, this will be deemed 'play-on'.
- 18.2. When the ball goes out of bounds, on the full, the nearest opponent shall kick the ball back into play.
- 18.3. If there is any doubt as to which team last touched the ball before it went out of bounds, the Umpire shall call a ball up two (2) metres in from the boundary line.

19. **PLAYING THE ADVANTAGE**

- 19.1. The field Umpire instead of awarding a Free Kick may allow play to continue by calling 'Advantage, Play On' in the case that the individual Player in possession of the ball initiatives the advantage.

20. **FIELD BOUNCES / BALL UPS**

- 20.1. The ball up shall be thrown when:
 - 20.1.1. The Umpire is unsure which team touched the ball before it went out of bounds.

- 20.1.2. The ball is trapped under a wheelchair.
- 20.1.3. Two or more Players from opposing sides hold onto the ball with no clear possession.
- 20.1.4. A Player falls out of their wheelchair during a contest. Note: In order to avoid injury to the Umpire, the Umpire is not to assist the Player to return to their wheelchair.
- 20.2. If the Umpire calls a ball up during general play, all Players in the zone where the ball up is held must start on the defensive side of their ruckman and not be within two (2) metres of the contest.

21. **FREE KICKS**

- 21.1. A Free Kick will be awarded by the Umpire in the following circumstances:
 - 21.1.1. While a Player is competing for the possession of the ball or defending a Player lifts their foot/feet off the footplate or their bottom off the seat of the wheelchair to gain an advantage.
 - 21.1.2. Holding a Player or the Player's wheelchair with their hands.
 - 21.1.3. Makes contact with another Player over the shoulders.
 - 21.1.4. During a marking contest, a Player cannot chop the arms of another Player attempting to Mark the ball.
 - 21.1.5. Push the player in the side, front or back.
 - 21.1.6. Deliberately bump, charge, or fend off another Player, outside of the laws of shepherding.
 - 21.1.7. Makes contact with an opponent's wheelchair behind the rear axle.
 - 21.1.8. Two or more Players clock an opposing Player from moving.
 - 21.1.9. A Player makes forceful front on contact to an opposing Player.
 - 21.1.10. A Player makes contact with an opposing Player's hands as they attempt to pick up the ball.
 - 21.1.11. A Player uses their wheelchair to prevent an opposing Player from moving.
 - 21.1.12. A Player illegally shepherds an opposition Player (see Rule 12)

22. **FIVE METRE PENALTY**

- 22.1. A five (5) metre penalty may be awarded when a Player:
 - 22.1.1. Over steps the 'Mark'.
 - 22.1.2. Engages in time-wasting.
 - 22.1.3. Uses abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language or behaviour towards an Umpire.
 - 22.1.4. Enters the protected two (2) metre area around a Player which has been awarded a Mark or Free Kick.
 - 22.1.5. Has not returned the football directly and on the full to the Player awarded the Free Kick or Mark.
 - 22.1.6. Engages in any other conduct for which a Free Kick would originally be awarded.
- 22.2. If a five metre penalty is awarded to a Back after a Free Kick or Mark within the Centre Zone the Back may take the kick from where the Mark is (including if it is in the Forward Zone).

23. **INJURED PLAYER**

- 23.1. If a Player cannot take a Free Kick that has been awarded due to injury or illness, then another teammate may take the kick.

24. END OF GAME

- 24.1. Upon the completion of the final quarter, the team with the highest total score is deemed the winner. In the event of a drawn match, the Competition Manager may use 'extra-time' to determine a winner.
- 24.2. Extra time will consist of two (2) x five (5) minute halves, with a two (2) minute break between the end of the final quarter and the commencement of the first extra time half. This is in order to conduct interchange and confirm the score.
- 24.3. At the end of the first extra time half, teams are to immediately change ends so that play can recommence. There is no break between the two halves.
- 24.4. At the end of the second half, if the scores are still tied, play will continue until the next score. The team that just scored will be deemed the winner.

25. WHEELCHAIR SPECIFICATIONS

- 25.1. The wheelchair is considered to be part of the Player.
- 25.2. Must have two large wheels at the back and one or two small wheels at the front of the wheelchair.
- 25.3. The wheelchair may have one or two anti-tip devices utilising no more than a total of two small castors attached to either the frame or rear axle and located at the rear of the wheelchair.
- 25.4. The anti-tip devices must not protrude pass the line of the rear wheels and castors must be no more than 2cm off the floor.
- 25.5. Front fender bar must not be no more than 11cm to centre of bar off the floor.
- 25.6. Rear wheels to be no more than a maximum of 27".
- 25.7. Maximum height of wheelchair frame including cushion 58cm.
- 25.8. Wheelchair must have no protruding footplates or parts.
- 25.9. Tyres may be coloured as long as they don't Mark the field.
- 25.10. If a wheelchair has a rear bar it must be covered with a soft material.
- 25.11. It is recommended that the Player's wheelchair has a belt/strap to restrain the Player and prevent them from falling out.

26. PLAYER'S WHEELCHAIR, JEWELLERY AND PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

- 26.1. A Player shall not wear during a match:
 - 26.1.1. Jewellery (including rings, bracelets or necklaces) or watches.
 - 26.1.2. Medic Alert and religious devices may be worn at the Players own risk. The Player is to inform the Umpire prior to the start of the match.
- 26.2. A field Umpire may inspect a Players hands or any protective equipment that a Player intends to wear or use during the match.
- 26.3. The field Umpires will inspect Player's wheelchair before the start of play.

27. SEND OFF RULE

- 27.1. The process for penalties adjudicated by the Umpire are as follows:

- 27.1.1. For crude language or incidental rough conduct, a verbal warning and Free Kick against them will be given for the first offence, with a five (5) metre penalty to be given for a second offence.
- 27.1.2. For verbal abuse or deliberate rough conduct, a five (5) metre penalty will be given for the first offence.
- 27.1.3. For additional offences of the above actions, the Player will be sent off for the remainder of the match.
- 27.2. If the Umpire deems that a reportable offence has been committed, the offending Player will be sent off and a set penalty will be provided.
- 27.3. If a second reportable offence occurs during the competition, the Player will be de-registered and not able to participate in the competition any longer.
- 27.4. Team captains will be informed of Players who are to be sent off.
- 27.5. The Competition Manager reserves the right to invoke heavier penalties if circumstances require. Repeat offenders will have their suspensions doubled from the previous time to double the prescribed penalty if a different incident has occurred with the same Player.

28. DUTY OF CARE

- 28.1. A Player second to the contest, has a duty of care to protect the hands and head of the Player first to the contest. Should any Player second to the contest fail to approach the contest with safety, a Free Kick will be awarded against them.

29. SET PENALTIES

- 29.1. Using abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language towards or in relation to any participating Player/Umpire – 1 game
- 29.2. For a second offence of Rule 29.1. in the same tournament – 2 games
- 29.3. Striking another person – 3 games
- 29.4. Engaging in time wasting – 1 game
- 29.5. Charging other person – 2 games
- 29.6. Making contact with another Player after that Player has taken a Mark, disposed of the football or after the football is otherwise out of play – 1 game
- 29.7. Engaging in rough play against an opponent which in the circumstances is unreasonable – 2 games
- 29.8. Spitting at or on another Player – 2 games
- 29.9. Attempting to strike another person – 1 game

The point of contact regarding Wheelchair Aussie Rules is:

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Please note that anything with a line to the right indicate a rule change or update in Version 3.

Updated by Kelsey Singh on behalf of Disability Sports Australia and the Wheelchair Aussie Rules Committee

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